Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15 SSO-00 PA-01 ICAE-00
SP-02 INR-10 INRE-00 /041 W
----------078612 031747Z /42
O 031725Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4668

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 14269

PASS WHITE HOUSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP
SUBJ: JACK ANDERSON AUGUST 2 COLUMN:"LILLIAN CARTER A HIT IN ITALY"

REF: USINFO R 021533Z AUG 78

1. EMBASSY EXPECTS AUGUST 2 JACK ANDERSON COLUMN ON MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT TO ITALY TO BE PLAYED WIDELY BY ITALIAN PRESS. GIVEN HOSTILITY OF SOME OF THE ITALIAN PRESS TO U.S., IT IS LIKELY THAT MANY HEADLINES WILL FOCUS ON REPORTED EMBASSY COMMENT ON PRESIDENT PERTINI'S "IRASCIBILITY" AND HIS PAST CRITICAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS AMERICAN POLICY.

2. IMPACT ON PERTINI IS LIKELY TO BE SERIOUS AND LONG LASTING, FIRST, HE IS BOUND TO BE OFFENDED BY THIS COMPROMISE OF A PRIVATE CONVERSATION. SECOND, HE WILL BE DISPLEASED AT HAVING BEEN DESCRIBED IN A PEJORATIVE WAY IN AN OFFICIAL STATE DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION. FINALLY, HE WILL BE IRRITATED AT THE ASSERTION THAT HE WAS "COMPLETELY WON OVER BY MRS. CARTER'S PERSONAL MANNER" AND ESPECIALLY THAT THE TRIP "SURELY HAS DONE MUCH TO SOFTEN HIS EARLIER CRITICAL ATTITUDE" AND THAT IT HAS
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"PUT HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT ON FRIENDLY FOOTING."

3. AT LEAST ONE SOURCE IN QUIRINAL BELIEVES THAT PERTINI MAY FEEL COMPELLED TO "STIFFEN HIS ATTITUDE" IN HIS RELATIONS WITH EMBASSY AND THAT HIS "RELATIONS WITH U.S. COULD BECOME MORE DIFFICULT."

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4. EMBASSY HAS CONTACTED PERTINI'S PRESS COUNSELOR TO ALERT HIM TO THE ARTICLE AND TO COORDINATE RESPONSES TO PRESS QUERIES. WE HAVE ALSO INFORMED HIS DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR.

5. IN ANSWER TO PRESS QUERIES EMBASSY BELIEVES BEST COURSE TO FOLLOW IS TO REMIND JOURNALISTS OF THE PRODUCTIVE AND SYMPATHETIC NATURE OF MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT. EMBASSY WILL, OF COURSE, DECLINE TO COMMENT ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE CABLE.

6. QUIRINAL HAS NOT YET DECIDED HOW TO REACT TO QUESTIONS, BUT WILL PRESUMABLY DECLINE TO COMMENT ON WHAT IS A CONFI-DENTIAL DIPLOMATIC CABLE AND WILL REPEAT THEIR EARLIER EVALUATION THAT THE VISIT WAS "WARM AND FRIENDLY."

7. EMBASSY WILL USE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE IN RESPONSE TO PRESS QUERIES:
A. ON AUTHENTICITY OF THE CABLE: QUOTE - NO COMMENT - END QUOTE.
B. ON MEETING WITH PRESIDENT PERTINI: QUOTE - AS YOU KNOW, MISS LILLIAN WAS DELIGHTED WITH HER VISIT TO ROME, AND ESPECIALLY WITH HER CALL ON PRESIDENT PERTINI. MISS LILLIAN WAS WON OVER BY THE FRANKNESS AND WARMTH OF PRESIDENT PERTINI, AND DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY HIS CONCERN FOR
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THE POOR AND THE OPPRESSED; CONCERNS WHICH SHE SHARES. END QUOTE. HOLMES

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